REMARKS

The Office Action Mailed 27 September 2004 cited Okamura et al. (EP 0 985 528) in relation to claims 1 to 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Claims 1-16 are pending. Claims 1, 4 and 5 have been amended for clarity. New claims 7 to 16 have been added reciting features disclosed in the originally filed application.

Okamura et al. discloses a plate making systems and method "wherein a plate feeder, an exposure unit and a developer are linearly arranged, ... [and] wherein there are provided on the downstream side of the developer ... a first bender for forming bends ... " (emphasis added, see col. 2, ln. 27-46). The developer (5) of Okamura et al. "has within a case 32, a heater 33, developer 34, rinser 35, rubber coater 36 and dryer 37 as shown in Fig. 3. In this unit the latent image formed in the exposure unit 3 is heated by the heater 33 and fixed on the printing face on the plate and then the high sensitive photopolymer layer other than the fixed images is removed with alkaline solution to form a printing face. The plate material is then rinsed in the rinser 35 and put to protective treatment such as coating with rubber in the rubber coater 36." (see col. 7, ln. 27-36).

Previously pending claims 1 and 4 have been amended to clarify that in methods according to the invention a processless plate is bent "without developing the plate". Okamura et al. fails to disclose or suggest such methods, since the method of Okamura et al. requires that the plates be developed.

Previously pending claim 5 has been amended to clarify that the automatic plate bender is "positioned adjacent to an imaging system". Okamura et al. fail to disclose such a computer-to-plate platesetter, since Okamura et al. specifies that the developer is located between the exposure unit and the benders.

Furthermore, Okamura et al. teach away from the use of processless plates, since there would be no reason to pass processless plates through a developer.

In addition to the reasons set out above, it is submitted that claims 2 and 6 further distinguish the present invention from the teachings of Okamura et al. The Office Action, on page 2, states that "Okamura et al. teaches a method and apparatus wherein said computer-to-plate

plate setter is a thermal computer-to-plate plate setter (Column 7, Lines 27-34)." This is not the case. The above quoted passage from column 7 lines 27-34 of Okamura et al. makes it clear that the image is "formed in the exposure unit 3." As can be seen from column 6, lines 17-33 of Okamura et al., the exposure unit (3) comprises laser scanning heads (23), and is not a "thermal computer-to-plate platesetter", as recited in claims 2 and 6.

New claims 7-16 are submitted to further distinguish the cited reference.

Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 1, 4 and 5, as well as claims 2, 3 and 6 to 16 which depend therefrom, are patentable over Okamura et al. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____

Gavin N. Manning
Registration No. 36,412
tel: 604.669.3432
fax: 604.681.4081
e-mail: docket3@patentable.com

Vancouver, B.C.
CANADA

@PFDesktop\::ODMA/Intradoc/216422801 14002rj